

Status of Seven Small Steps Proposals
Parking Strategies Committee
Following 1+ years of outreach and June 14 Public meeting
Thursday, June 28, 2001
Updated by Mary Catherine Snyder, City of Seattle-SPO Sept. 27, 2001

(Please refer to neighborhood comments posted at www.wallingford.org/parking)

#1 Adjust parking time limit signs to make parking consistent

Currently, 1-hour & 2-hour parking spaces are mixed unpredictably in some blocks creating confusion for drivers. We propose moving some signs across 45th St. to consolidate 1-hour spaces on the south side and 2-hour spaces on the north, for example, simplifying parking and enforcement. Businesses could then advertise Wallingford parking as “One, Two, FREE”, to encourage customer parking in the commercial district.

September 2001 Update: SeaTran and SPO distributed the petitions necessary for this change at the beginning of August. The Chamber decided against petitioning businesses on each block for the parking rule changes. They said that it would undermine the reasons for having a parking committee and public forum.

#2 Explore angled parking in selected areas along Wallingford Ave & 46th St

On wide streets, angled parking can be an effective way to simultaneously add more parking capacity while calming traffic by giving the illusion that there's less space to drive. Areas to look at: Wallingford Avenue from 42nd to 45th and 46th Street from Stone Way to Meridian.

Proposal was rejected with exception of two areas: 46th Street between Densmore and Wallingford (N side of QFC parking lot) and 46th Street & Interlake area near Post Office. Kent will talk with Rich Lopez, QFC manager. Area near P.O. could be referred to Crosstown Traffic studies, to begin in 2002. Otherwise, the proposal will be dropped; residents may pursue in the future if they wish.

Neighbors concerns: 1) “What parking problem??, we have spaces available outside our homes all day long.” 2) Angled parking might lend a ‘commercial’ feel to an otherwise residential area. Don’t need it, don’t want it.

September 2001 Update: The store manager at QFC gave his verbal approval to Kent Christianson for angled parking to be installed adjacent to the overflow parking lot. SeaTran is looking at the traffic conditions more closely to make sure the angled parking would not dramatically impact truck and residential traffic flow . SeaTran should be able to report back in 2-3 weeks.

#3 Improve parking enforcement

Parking enforcement is critical if we want to see any real parking improvement in Wallingford. The Seattle Police Department (SPD) parking resources are limited, but we join many other neighborhoods in continuing to work with them. As an interim measure, we propose an “education blitz” to inform folks about the need for customers, employees and business owners to respect any new on-street parking system we adopt.

Chamber and SPO will work together to produce a postcard to gently remind parking violators to respect posted parking regulations. SPO has budget to produce and will contract with graphic

designer. City continues to explore ways to deal with this citywide problem. This work will happen this year.

September 2001 Update: SPO will work with the Chamber this year on this project. We should meet soon to discuss it.

#4 Install 1 or 2 hour parking signs along side streets within 1/3 block of 45th St.

A number of spaces on the side streets just off 45th St. are next to businesses, yet are unsigned and often used as park-and-rides for bus commuters. We propose installing signs for these spaces consistent with nearby parking along 45th St., allowing higher turnover during retail hours.

September 2001 Update: SeaTran staff are informing businesses along the particular streets that the signs will be installed. While SeaTran will plan on installing signs consistent with what is along the nearby blocks, the businesses certainly could request a different time-limit sign (along with a loading zone installation/removal if interested). The signs will be installed this year unless the businesses strongly object.

#5 Consider removing a few selected parking spaces near intersections to improve transit service.

No decisions will be made before completion of detailed corridor studies. Our other proposals give a net gain in parking capacity, here we'll have to give some back. 45th Street poses critical bottlenecks for the #44 bus that must be addressed. Removing just a few spaces will allow queue jumps & other intersection changes that can significantly help transit with minimal negative impact to the neighborhood. The Crosstown Traffic-Wallingford team is arranging funding for the studies.

This proposal will be included in Crosstown Traffic project, Phase 2 Studies to be conducted in 2002.

#6 Move or consolidate Load Zones along 45th St. and mark them clearly for easy access.

Paint over curb markings where bus stops have been moved. Simple maintenance: Some Load Zones don't meet the needs of the current business tenants on each block and most are poorly marked. Businesses have already been surveyed for their needs and will be asked to help determine changes. Bus stops were moved in 1999, but curbs at abandoned stops didn't get painted out, confusing drivers.

Businesses on each block will be asked to identify their needs. SeaTran will adjust Load Zones accordingly. Old bus zone markings will be painted out.

September 2001 Update: SeaTran has had a backlog for sometime for these types of maintenance projects. The painting and clean-up will be done, although it will likely be next Spring (it isn't feasible to do painting in the rainy winter months).

#7 Eliminate peak period parking (7-9 am & 4-6 pm) on the south side of 45th St. from Sunnyside to I-5 (original proposal)

The rush-hour backup often extends well past Meridian as cars wait at the metered on-ramp to southbound I-5. According to the Washington Department of Transportation (WSDOT), the meter is not negotiable so the neighborhood must find ways to accommodate the backup and help the bus get through. All of the businesses along here have either off-street or side street

parking for their customers. This won't eliminate the back-ups, but it will help during peak periods.

Neighborhood concerns: Parked cars provide barriers for pedestrians from moving vehicles. Other barriers must be included in any plans to use curb lanes for travel.

The peak period parking restrictions can be installed between 2nd Ave and Latona Ave. SeaTran will send a letter to abutting property owners along 45th Street between 2nd Avenue and Latona Ave informing them of the impending installation of signs restricting parking during the peak periods. The letter will discuss the recent community discussions and that the proposal has the support of Weaving Wallingford and the Chamber of Commerce. Since we also discussed extending the peak period ban west to the block between 1st and Eastern (where 2-hour parking is currently allowed), SeaTran will investigate this idea as this proposal is being implemented.

September 2001 Update: SeaTran sent out the letter to businesses in July/August. The peak period ban will extend from 2nd Ave to Latona. There already is no parking between 1st and Eastern Ave. The peak period time will be extended to 3pm-6pm. The work instructions have been issued, so this should happen in the next 2-3 weeks.